# WRT 208 Final Assignment (Fall 2023)

## Overview

All semester, you’ve worked toward this moment—you’ve learned *something* (or *somethings*) from your research that you think an audience that’s part of “the public” (that is, not an academic audience) would benefit from knowing. Your final assignment asks you to figure out (or, if you prefer, to decide) the best way to get your research findings to that audience. To be successful, your final assignment needs to answer these questions--

* What’s the message (or information) you want people to know? How are you pitching for them?
* Who are you talking to (the audience) and why them?
* Why do you want them to know what you’re telling them?
* How are you reaching them? What’s the genre, and the medium, in which you can most effectively present what you want them to know?

Easy, right? Except....

## Key Expectations

As the culmination of a semester’s work, it's time for you to show that you’ve done enough *research* and done it well enough that you have *something* to say about it to somebody else. And to show that you understand rhetorical principles like *audience*, *purpose*, and *genre* well enough to build a project that makes those hang together. The major expectations of the assignment are:

1. Your research is visible in the project: you’re referring to source material; using evidence from it; building on the credibility of the people whose work you’re referencing; recognizing complexities and uncertainties. This shouldn’t be something you could have done in August or September.
2. You can define an audience that’s precise; articulate a message that’s clear and meaningful for them; be clear about why you want them to hear you; and show you understand the genre conventions of your chosen way of addressing the message to the audience (e.g., your Instagram feed or Tweet thread wouldn’t have a Works Cited list, so how will you let your audience know what your sources are?).

In short: you’re shaping the key findings of your research so that they provide useful knowledge to a specific audience for a discernible reason, and you’re doing it the most efficient way you can.

1. About the Demagoguery part of the course: I’ve made it optional whether you address demagoguery related to your research topic. You can take on demagoguery directly; you can create actual demagoguery (with some limits we’ll talk about if anyone decides to do this); or you can decide not to touch it.

## Options

You can fulfill the final assignment in one of two ways, and I promise I have no preference between these:

1. You can actually create the project that does what you want: build the website; record the video; do the podcast episode; write the speech for the local schoolboard; post (or mock up) the Instagram feed or Tweet thread; write the Buzzfeed listicle; whatever it is. If you think you can do it well and it will better represent your thinking and your effort, do it.
2. You can write an essay describing what that project would be if you were going to do it: what’s the content; who’s the audience and why them? [See the bulleted list at the top.]

You should do whichever of those you feel better about.

## Workload (aka, How Long Is This?)

You should expect your overall work for the assignment to be in the range of 1500-2000 words. That’s true whether you write the essay/description of the project or make the project itself.

If you make the project and include non-print elements (visuals, moving video, audio), you can figure out how much to do based on this conversion chart--

* Still images/graphics: 50 words apiece
* Audio: 100 words/minute
* Video: 200 words/minute

Let me say loud and clear—**you have to create these for them to count. You can’t pull stock images off the internet and count them as your work. You don’t get workload credit for embedding somebody else’s YouTube video on your blog.** You can *use* those materials (as long as you credit them); you just don’t count them.

## Deadline

Due with Final Portfolio at your section’s final exam time.